

KANE COUNTY (UTAH). COMMISSION ^[1480]

MINUTES, 1864-[ongoing]

DESCRIPTION: The minutes record the actions of the county commission (known during the territorial period as the county court), the governing body of the county. The court was authorized to manage all county business and county property. This included auditing all claims against the county. The members authorized salaries and the purchase of supplies and services. They levied property taxes for county purposes and served as a board of equalization. The members created election precincts, road districts, and school districts and appointed superintendents of such districts. They also appointed other county officials (e.g. pound keepers, fish and game wardens, fruit tree inspectors, sheep inspectors) and set the salaries of each. The court located sites and oversaw the erection of public buildings. Business licenses, particularly liquor licenses, were obtained through the commission. The commission approved the incorporation of towns. The selectmen in conjunction with the court (after statehood, the commissioners) were to provide for the maintenance of the indigent and incapacitated. All these activities are noted in the minutes. Because Kane County is located in an area of rugged terrain, the county commission has always been particularly concerned with road maintenance and management. The commission has also been highly involved in land management issues. From the organization of the county until the 1950s the commission managed grazing rights within the county. More recently the commission has been involved in managing the wilderness area included in the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument.

Following the formation of territorial government, the legislature in 1852 passed acts relating to the formation and government of counties. There were no county commissions, but the probate judge in conjunction with the county selectmen were invested "with the usual powers and jurisdiction of County Commissioners" and as such were known as the county court. The probate court clerk (also known as the county clerk) was to keep the records of the court. This same structure was followed by Kane County upon its creation in January 1864. Volume A (1864-1883) includes the minutes of the original Kane County Court which met in Grafton.

Volume B (1883-1902) was begun when the county seat was moved to Kanab in 1883. With statehood in 1896 an actual board of county commissioners was created. The probate judge was removed, but the selectmen continued serving as commissioners until elections were held. The county clerk remained the clerk of the board, recording the minutes. The previous responsibilities were maintained and expanded.

The principal activity noted in the minutes is the monitoring of the fiscal health of the county. Bills submitted for the purchase of supplies and services are recorded at each meeting. The county commission assessed taxes and served as a board of equalization, adjusting assessments of individual property. Another major responsibility is the lay out of roads and bridges. Other responsibilities noted in the minutes include the appointment and fiscal oversight of numerous county, district and precinct officials. The commissioners created school districts and road districts. In 1901, the commissioners created two water districts. The commissioners served as canvassers of elections also appointing election officers, setting the boundaries of voting districts, and assigning polling places. Frequently, election results were included in the minutes. They financed the care of the indigent, deaf, and insane. They approved the incorporation of towns and licensed businesses. Commissioners provided for building public buildings, notably a court house and jail in the late 1880s. In 1950 the county built a hospital in Kanab, and thereafter the county commission has managed the Kane County Hospital.

Ongoing, the Kane County Commission has worked closely with all Kane County communities, supporting them in providing public services such as fire protection, ambulance service, bookmobile service, and senior citizens' centers. The Commission has also worked closely with the Five Counties Association of Government and with the Utah Travel Council to promote tourism in the county.

The commission has provided oversight for the management of the county's natural resources. The commission has always appointed fish and game wardens and necessary agricultural and building inspectors. In the 1960s the county commission worked on a master plan for the county which included the development of a huge power plant on the Kaiparowitz Plateau in eastern Kane County. Kaiparowitz project plans included the development of coal mining to support the power plant and the establishment of a new city. Kaiparowitz development was projected to bring employment and needed revenue to Kane County. The project never materialized. Since the early 1980s the commission has been very involved in working with the Planning Commission and Board of Adjustments on subdivision development and zoning issues. The commission has been highly involved in the creation and management of the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument. Beginning in the mid-1990s the Kane County Commission organized opposition to the creation of a national monument and to the designation of additional wilderness area within the county. However, after the creation of the National Monument the commission became highly involved in working with Governor Leavitt, the Bureau of Land Management, and other southern Utah county commissions to plan for and manage the new wilderness area. The Kane County Water Conservancy District and Kane County Resource Development Committee (established 1998) have assisted the

commission in managing the county's natural and water resources.

ARRANGEMENT: The minutes are arranged chronologically by date of meeting.

RESEARCH NOTE: With the organization of Kane County, the Washington County clerk created a transcript of minutes for all proceedings of the Washington County Court which related to the organization of Kane County. These minutes begin with the settlement of Fort Harmony in 1856 and continue to 1870. They are contained in Volume B (1856-1870), Washington County transcript, and are followed by copies of all records in the Washington County recorder's office which related to property in what became Kane County. The transcripts include copies of land certificates, transfers, and probate judge or mayor's deeds for townsite lots in New Harmony and Toquerville.

Beginning in 1991, the minutes also include copies of ordinances and resolutions passed by the Kane County Commission, as well as additional exhibits relevant to commission business.

RELATED RECORDS: Other record series created by the Kane County Commission include ORDINANCES, series 24227; and CORRESPONDENCE, series 24234. The minutes in Book B (transcriptions from Washington County) are also included in Washington County Commission MINUTES, series 84226. While the minutes summarize the meetings of the commission, many other county agencies recorded the particulars. Thus the other holdings of the county commission and other Kane county agencies should be consulted.

PROCESSING NOTE: Volume B (1883-1902) was filmed in 1966 by the LDS Genealogical Society. The remaining books were microfilmed by Utah State Archives in August 2002. This series was processed by A.C. Cone in February 1996, and updated by Rosemary Cundiff in February 2003. The Kane County Clerk as secretary for the Kane County Commission should be contacted for other holdings.

CONTAINER LIST

Reel	Description
1	1864, Jul - 1883, Dec (Book A)
1	1856, Feb - 1870, Apr (Book B, Washington Co transcript)
2	1883, Mar - 1902, Feb (Book B)
3	1902, Jun - 1913, Jan (Old Book C)
4	1913, Feb - 1923, Dec (Minute Book A)
4	1924, Jan - 1947, Dec (Minute Book B)
4	1948, Jan - 1970, Apr (Minute Book 2)
4	1970, May - 1975, Dec (Minute Book 3)
5	1976, Jan - 1978, Dec (Minute Book 4)

Reel	Description
5	1979, Jan - 1981, Dec (Minute Book 5)
5	1982, Jan - 1985, Apr (Minute Book 6)
5	1985, Apr - 1987, Dec (Minute Book 7)
5	1988, Jan - 1989, Sep (Minute Book 8)
5	1989, Sep - 1990, Mar (Minute Book 9)
6	1990, Apr - 1991, May (Minute Book 9, continued)
6	1991, Jun - 1993, Jan (Minute Book 10)
6	1993, Jan - 1994, Sep (Minute Book 11)
6	1994, Aug - 1996, Dec (Minute Book 12)
7	1997, Jan - 1999, Dec (Minute Book 13)
7	2000, Jan - 2002, Jul (Minute Book 14)